

continuously circumferentially around said pulley and in said plane for engaging said strip, thereby preventing transverse displacements of said endless belt with respect to the working direction; and

a processing unit disposed between said input and output conveyors for processing said material.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said output-side pulley of said input conveyor and said input-side pulley of said output conveyor are driven by a single power unit to rotate at substantially the same speed.

17. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said input-side pulley of said input conveyor and said output-side pulley of said output conveyor are passively driven by said output-side pulley of said input conveyor and said input-side pulley of said output conveyor, respectively, via said endless belts of said input and output conveyors, respectively.

18. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said strip has two side faces and a top face all extending longitudinally of said endless belt, said sides faces tapering away from said opposing surface and ending at said top face.

19. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein said strip is provided with a plurality of V-shaped notches distributed longitudinally of said endless belt and extending from said top face toward, without contacting with, said opposing surface.

20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein said grooves of said pulleys are in constant contact with said strip.

21. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein said strip extends continuously throughout an entire length of said endless belt.

22. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said groove has a shape conforming to a shape of said strip.

23. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising at least one hold-down member having a non-marring surface for pressing said material against said non-skid surface.

24. The apparatus of claim 23, wherein said at least one hold-down member further has a pneumatic cylinder loaded arm for pressing said non-marring surface against said material.

25. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said endless belt has an upper portion traveling in the working direction, and said processing unit includes at least one saw blade rotatable in a plane substantially perpendicular to said upper portion.

26. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said at least one saw blade is rotatable about an axis co-elevational with said input and output conveyors.

27. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said groove has a width in a direction transverse to the working direction smaller than that of said endless belt.

28. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising a work bed disposed immediately beneath a portion of said endless belt, which travels in the working direction, for bearing at least a partial weight of said material.

29. The apparatus of claim 28, wherein said work bed is disposed horizontally.

30. The apparatus of claim 28, wherein said work bed includes another groove extending in the working direction in alignment with said groove, said another groove having a shape conforming to that of said strip for engaging said strip.

31. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said apparatus is formed without a fence arranged to otherwise provide a lateral edge contact with the material being carried by at least one of said input and output conveyors.

32. A method of processing material, comprising the steps of:

a) providing a processing apparatus comprising input and output conveyors installed in series and spaced apart from each other for carrying the material to be processed in a working direction, each of the input and output conveyors including an endless belt having a non-skid upper surface adapted to carry the material and a lower opposing surface provided thereon with a guiding strip extending longitudinally of the endless belt, and a pair of input-side and output-side pulleys having horizontal axes of rotation around which the endless belt is trained with the non-skid upper surface facing outwardly and the guiding strip extending in a plane substantially parallel with the working direction, each of the pulleys having a groove extending continuously circumferentially around the pulley and in the plane for engaging the strip thereby preventing transverse displacements of the endless belt with respect to the working direction, said apparatus further comprising a processing unit disposed between the input and output conveyors for processing the material;

b) carrying the material on the non-skid upper surface of the input conveyor toward the processing unit;

c) processing the material with said processing unit; and

d) carrying the processed material on the non-skid upper surface of the output conveyor away from the processing unit

wherein steps b) and d) are performed without positive lateral edge contact of the material with said apparatus. --